

Illinois Route 53/120 Project  
 Finance Committee Meeting #1  
 October 21, 2013  
 Meeting Minutes issued by Lake County

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m. which was followed by roll call.

Present	Representing
Present	Chris Meister, Co-Chair
Present	Doug Whitley, Co-Chair
Present	Aaron Lawlor, Lake County
Present	Village of Buffalo Grove
Present	Village of Grayslake
Present	Village of Gurnee
Present	Village of Hainesville
Present	Village of Hawthorn Woods
	Village of Kildeer
	Village of Lake Zurich
	Village of Lakemoor
Present	Village of Libertyville
Present	Village of Long Grove
Present	Village of Mundelein
Present	Village of Round Lake
Present	Village of Round Lake Park
Present	Village of Vernon Hills
	Village of Volo
Present	Village of Wauconda
Present	City of Waukegan
Present	Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways
	McHenry County
Present	Metropolis Strategies
Present	BRAC Founding Co-Chairs
Present	Liberty Prairie Foundation
Present	Lake County Partners
Present	Lake County Transportation Alliance
Present	Illinois Department of Transportation
Present	Federal Highway Administration

**Mr. Zuccherro (RZ)** announced that Kristi Lafleur was detained in traffic en route to the meeting. **RZ** welcomed the attendees and thanked them for their participation in the process. **RZ** introduced the co-chairs of the Finance Committee, **Chris Meister** and **Doug Whitley**. He indicated that the Finance Committee will build on the work done by the Blue Ribbon Advisory Council (BRAC). **RZ** indicated that this Committee, led by the Tollway, is one of two committees

looking at unresolved issues identified by the BRAC: financing and land use. The Land Use Committee, led by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), will begin their work early next year.

**RZ** indicated that the committee's goal is to develop and reach consensus on a viable and sustainable strategy to finance the IL 53/120 project. **RZ** also stressed to the committee members that their participation is critical to the success of this effort. With that the committee members were asked to introduce themselves. (Kristi Lafleur (**KL**) arrived at 2:20 p.m.)

**RZ** then introduced **Paula Trigg (PT)**, Lake County Director of Transportation and County Engineer, to update the Committee on the need for the project. **PT** presented a slide showing congested roadway segments in Lake County. She indicated that (1) some iteration of the IL 53/120 project has been studied since the 1960's; (2) land development has historically outpaced transportation improvements; (3) one third of the roadway network in Lake County is congested during peak travel times; (4) 100,000 vehicles/day are entering or exiting IL 53 at Lake Cook Road; and (5) there is a strong need for additional north-south capacity in Lake County as well as capacity along IL 120.

**PT** presented a second slide that outlined the County Board's strategic goal to reduce congestion and improve mobility. The slide listed five benefits that would result from the implementation of the project. **PT** indicated that an advisory referendum on the construction of the project was endorsed by 76% of Lake County voters. She also indicated that the Central Lake County Corridor (IL Route 53/120) was identified by CMAP as the best capital project in GoTo 2040 to improve regional mobility.

**Doug Whitley (DW)** was introduced and he proceeded to give the Committee an overview of the BRAC process and the vision for the corridor that resulted. He mentioned that he is the President/CEO of the Illinois Chamber of Commerce and that he was a member of the BRAC. He also mentioned that he is not a resident of Lake County, but has been involved and supportive in a number of initiatives within Lake County.

**DW** said that financing is one of the big unresolved issues identified by the BRAC; how do we pay for this project? He went on to say that this follow-up process will hopefully go a long way to answering the question of how do we get this done? He indicated that we have to work together to arrive at a consensus and in order to do this we need to get to know one another. This needs to be a collaborative process.

**DW** presented a slide that showed the funding gap for the project of approximately \$2.1 billion. He indicated that the BRAC worked with planning level cost estimates to identify order of magnitude costs. The BRAC performed a preliminary financing assessment that resulted in the acknowledgement that even with tolls there is a large funding gap. The question we need to answer is how will the gap be closed? **DW** urged in the context of diminishing available federal

dollars, that the Committee needs to work collaboratively to develop funding solutions. He repeated KL's intentions of ensuring that everyone has a seat at the table.

**Chris Meister (CM)** was introduced and he proceeded to relate his experience working on the Elgin O'hare Western Access (EOWA) project. **CM** mentioned that he is with the Illinois Finance Authority and is also not a Lake County Resident. **CM** acknowledged the Committee's stewardship for natural resources and desire to promote economic development and present business from leaving for Wisconsin.

**CM** presented a slide showing that the EOWA initially had a \$5.8 billion funding gap at the end of the Tier One EIS (environmental impact statement). He mentioned that the EOWA also had a long history and that it was also identified as a fiscally constrained capital project in CMAP's GoTo 2040 plan. He walked the committee through the project timeline that highlighted a modified project with a much lower price tag, a system wide increase in tolls and the Move Illinois capital program resulting in a funding gap of only \$300 million. The EOWA process resulted in the recognition that a system wide toll increase coupled with local financial participation was essential.

**CM** stated that the key takeaways from the EOWA process were (1) closing the gap is possible; (2) the project could not rely on federal funding; (3) examine how costs can be reduced; and (4) financing plan included tolling an existing roadway.

**CM and RZ** described the similarities between the EOWA and IL 53/120 and stressed that there is a playbook, this can be done. Phased implementation is key to the financial strategy.

**CM** listed the lessons that were learned in the EOWA experience: (1) it is very important for all committee members to be consistently engaged throughout the process; (2) it is very important for everyone to get to know each other and to be candid in their discussions; and (3) informal conversations are as important as the formal ones.

**CM** presented a slide on the role of the Finance Committee. The mission is to answer to basic questions posed by the BRAC (1) is the project feasible? and (2) should the Tollway build it? He stated that the Tollway Board has requested a recommendation by the end of 2014. He moved to another slide listing the topics to be addressed and the timeline to be met.

**CM and DW** opened the floor to questions from the committee members.

**Roger Byrne (RB)** asked if the EOWA process started as shown on the slide. And, does the BRAC process equate to this timeline?

**KL** responded by saying no, the EOWA was already in a Tier One EIS process. The BRAC process does not equate to an EIS.

**RB** So, are we talking 3 years to break ground?

**KL** Not sure, perhaps 3 years to construction.

**RZ** EOWA process took longer because federal action was required.

**Steve Barg (SB)** When do you expect the consultant's (Transystems) analysis of the funding gap?

**Aimee Lee (ALee)** responded by saying in February or March.

**George Ranney (GR)** Please explain the improved toll revenue projection for the EOWA between June 2011 and August 2011.

**KL** The Tollway Board decided that a system wide toll increase (tolls were doubled) was acceptable. Is there support for another doubling of tolls system wide? Probably not, we will have to explore ways to leverage the existing system to find a funding solution for IL 53/120.

**Jim LaBelle (JL)** What is needed from this process to move the Tollway Board forward?

**KL** A consensus was important in the BRAC process and it will be necessary going forward in this committee as well as the Land Use Committee.

**ALee** Presented a slide indicating the dates for the next two meetings; early December and late January/February. Questions or requests for information are to be directed to Cathy Valente.

**ALee** also noted a user survey would be conducted this fall to assess one's willingness to pay.

**CM** Introduced **Jason Navota (JN)** from CMAP. **JN** will be facilitating the Land Use Committee process.

**JN** indicated that the Land Use Committee will be discussing land use, environmental and economic development impacts within the IL 53/120 corridor. The committee will be co-chaired by **GR and Aaron Lawlor (AL)**. CMAP is currently selecting a consultant to staff the committee. Work is scheduled to begin early next year.

**AL** indicated that he will be happy to meet with village boards to answer questions about the process.

**DW** Emphasized the importance of open communications. He wants to know you and wants you to know him.

At this point the meeting was opened to public comment.

**Chris Geiselhart** asked if today's PowerPoint presentation will be posted on the Tollway website.

**ALee** responded in the affirmative.

**Rob Sherman** indicated to the committee that he had several points that he wanted to make:

- The committee should separate the Route 53 portion of the project from the IL 120 portion.
- The committee should analyze the revenue for a 45 mph facility versus the revenue for a higher speed facility.
- The committee should consider terminating the Route 53 segment at IL Route 60.
- Consider not building a parkway.

- The consensus for tolling existing Route 53 south of Lake Cook Road should come from Cook County elected officials.

There being no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.